

MINUTES OF THE
SYBIL BRAND COMMISSION FOR INSTITUTIONAL INSPECTIONS
QUARTERLY ROUNDTABLE MEETING
JULY 27, 2005

CALL TO ORDER

Noting the lack of a quorum, Chair Montano called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

OPENING CEREMONIES

Chair Montano led the pledge of allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

ATTENDANCE

Present

Chair Eleanor R. Montano
Vice Chair Helen H. Stathatos
Frank Bacio
Carl Moore
Maxine B. Russell

Absent

Commissioner Cannella
Commissioner Hammargren

Others Present

Virginia Snapp, Probation
Candace Rhue, Auditor-Controller
Cheryl Epps, DCFS
Jack Leonard, Los Angeles Times
William Tut-Hayes, Community
Advocate
Khanh Nguyen, Deputy, Executive
Office
Lee Millen, Senior Staff
Sherry Scates, Commission Staff

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Montano reported that Commissioner Cannella's surgery was a success and he will convalesce at home for the next month. She also commented briefly on the tragic deaths that occurred at the recent Boy Scout Jamboree.

CORRESPONDENCE

Chair Montano noted that a packet was received from the Metropolitan State Hospital in response to the Commission's questions during their recent inspection of that facility. She advised that she will review the information and have copies made for the Commissioners.

STAFF REPORT

- Lee Millen, Senior Staff, advised that the Commission's copy machine has arrived and as soon as the power plug has been converted for its use, the machine will be installed.
- Sherry Scates, Commission Staff, advised that she was finally able to touch base with a Department of Mental Health (DMH) representative. Cora Fullmore, Adult and Juvenile Justice Programs, has offered to pass on the Commissions' concerns to Dr. Southard regarding the non-representation of DMH at the Commissions' Business and Roundtable meetings. Ms. Fullmore will also contact Dr. Mike Maloney, Womens' Forensic Outpatient Program at Twin Towers, who can speak to many of the day to day issues at that facility that may be of interest to the Commission.

Ms. Scates further advised that she has tried numerous times to contact William Sias, County Counsel, regarding the name and contact information for the DCFS County Counsel, as requested by the Commission, but has received no response to her inquiries. Also, no further updates have been received from Mr. Sias regarding the Commission's use of cameras.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF APRIL 20, 2005

Due to the lack of a quorum, the meeting minutes of July 20, 2005 were deferred to the next meeting.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

All participants contributed valuable input and brought the benefit of their expertise to a Roundtable discussion regarding the regulations and the monitoring of group/foster homes.

Auditor-Controller: Candace Rhue presented an update on the two group homes that the Auditor-Controller's office has requested the Commission inspect. Ms. Rhue noted that after numerous attempts, these facilities have failed to submit acceptable Corrective Action Plans. If their Plans are

approved by the time the Commission schedules an inspection, Ms. Rhue will forward that information for the Commissioners review. Ms. Rhue advised that she has nothing further to add to her report at last weeks' Business Meeting.

Sheriff's Department: No representative was present.

Probation Department: Virginia Snapp, Acting Chief Deputy, reported that the Probation Department has developed a more in-depth inspection criterion, "Outcomes", which includes interviews with incarcerated and group home minors to determine how they are doing and if their needs are being met. Ms. Snapp further noted that the Probation Department now has Group Home Consultants that are each assigned responsibility for a number of group homes. However, due to a staff shortage, the consultants spend most of their time reacting to problems instead of being proactive. The Department currently has approximately 80 in-field Deputy Probation Officers, each with a caseload of 30 to 35 minors. Additionally, due to a recent Federal mandate, the number of group homes a child has been placed in is now tracked and the optimum number of placements per child is 2, however; Ms. Snapp noted that this is not practical for the Los Angeles County area due to the number of impactors involved. She further advised that the Probation staff has been invited to participate in the DCFS in-service training academy program.

Commissioners remarked that suicide kits are needed in court holding tanks and requested that Ms. Snapp determine if adequate staffing levels exist at the Compton and Kenyan Courts.

In response to Commissioner Moore, Ms. Snapp advised that the Department is aware of increased racial tensions at Juvenile Hall and Probation Camps, and that staff is receiving sensitivity training to help them determine the difference between racial and gang incidents. When incidents do occur the other camps are notified. Ms. Snapp advised that the Probation Department youth and staff are now participating in the County's mentoring program; DCFS is also a participant.

Ms. Snapp further advised that she is the Acting Chief Deputy for the Probation Department, bringing over 33 years of probation experience to that position, and currently fills the vacancy left by Paul Higa's promotion to Chief Probation Officer.

Commissioners thanked Ms. Snapp for her valuable contributions and knowledgeable input; meeting with her is always a learning experience for the Commission.

Mental Health: No representative was present.

FACILITY/GROUP INSPECTION REPORTS

Pico Rivera Sheriff's Station

Chair Montano and Commissioner Hammargren inspected this facility on July 21st and gave a rating of **Satisfactory**. Areas of concern: the trustee quarters needs cleaning; and the jail needs painting.

Manna Manor/Ravenna Home - #67-3

Chair Montano visited this facility on July 26th and found no one at home; no inspection was conducted.

Central Juvenile Hall/Eastlake

Chair Montano and Commissioner Russell inspected this facility on July 25th and gave a rating of **Satisfactory**. Areas of concern: the kitchen equipment needs replacing; and one toilet is leaking. Commissioners noted: although the building is over 75 years old it is well maintained; residents are seen by medical and mental health staff and receive educational testing; and facility staff documents daily events/incidents so that trends can be identified.

Compton Courthouse

Commissioner Moore and Bacio inspected this facility on July 21st and gave a rating of **Satisfactory**. Areas of concern: window broken in shower area; an in-line grinder is needed to correct the sewer problems; and various areas need painting.

Inglewood Probation Court

Commissioners Moore and Bacio inspected this facility on July 26th and gave a rating of **Satisfactory**. Areas of concern: the jail cells need painting; the plumbing is very old; and there is no suicide kit in the holding area.

Commissioners noted that in spite of an extremely small office space, and stressful conditions, the five parole officers on staff are effective and have developed a professional working relationship. Commissioners commended these officers for maintaining their professional demeanor and up-beat attitude in spite of their cramped quarters and adverse conditions.

Project Six/Burbank II - #90-3

Vice Chair Stathatos inspected this facility on July 21st and gave a rating of **Satisfactory** with no areas of concern observed or reported.

Project Six/Hackel I - #91-2

Vice Chair Stathatos inspected this facility on July 21st and gave a rating of **Satisfactory** with no areas of concern observed or reported.

Project Six/Burbank III - #91-3

Vice Chair Stathatos visited this facility on July 21st and found no one at home; no inspection was conducted.

Rancho San Antonio - #92-1

Vice Chair Stathatos inspected this facility on July 25th and gave a rating of **Satisfactory** with no areas of concern observed or reported.

NEW BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Montano distributed inspection assignments to Commissioners for the following week.

PUBLIC COMMENT

William Tut-Hayes, Community Advocate, expressed his concerns regarding what he feels are unhealthy living conditions and the ill treatment and neglect of inmates at the Twin Towers facility. Mr. Tut-Hayes advised that by law inmates arrested for misdemeanors should be booked and then immediately released. Also, inmates 62 years of age or older must be seen by a physician before they can be released; however, he alleged that they must sometimes wait for hours before they can actually see a doctor.

MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA (To be presented and placed on a future agenda)

None

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Montano adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Scates

Commission Staff